

NSC BRIEFING

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7 May 1958

SOVIET SUBMARINE FORCE

*construction of at least two new classes*

- I. With submarine construction now well into new phase it is appropriate to review this subject.
- II. At end World War II, the Soviets had large submarine fleet. During 1945-49 they built a few units of pre-war design.
  - A. In 1949 they began to construct post-war designed long-range attack submarines.
  - II 4. 1949-1957 246 units of the "W" class (range 14,000 nautical miles) were produced making it backbone of present submarine force.
  - B. In 1952-55 18 long-range (25,000 n.m.) "Z" class units constructed.
  - C. Starting in 1954 49 units of medium-range "Q" class were built.
  - D. Priority of program illustrated by fact that, from 1950-57, 313 units produced--reaching peak of 86 in 1956.
- III. Construction of "Z" and "W" classes now ended. "Q" class program reduced, may have been terminated.
  - A. Now comes new phase which apparently consists of at least two new classes under construction at Komsomolsk in Far East, possibly Severodvinsk on White Sea and Leningrad where two new large submarines sighted in last week.
  - B. It is expected new classes will include:
    1. Hulls designed for high underwater speed,
    2. Nuclear propulsion,
    3. Hulls designed for internal carriage of guided missiles.

IV. Soviet submarine fleet--totalling 474 units--deployed in all four major fleet areas as indicated on map.

A. Marked increase in recent years of deployment long-range submarines to Northern and Pacific Fleets.

25X1

2. Estimate there now 109 long-range types in Northern Fleet and 68 in Pacific.

B. Soviet Submarine training is intensive, effective, and extends throughout most of world.

25X1

25X1

VI. Since 1956 evidence indicates some existing submarines converted for missile launching.

- A. Several sightings of submarines--possibly "Z" class--configured to carry missiles externally.
- B. Conversions may be interim measure until newly designed units available.

25X1

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25X1

27 May 1958

MEMORANDUM FOR: AD/CI

FROM : Acting Chief, Sino-Soviet Bloc Area  
SUBJECT : Soviet and French Communist Objectives and Tactics  
Toward De Gaulle

1. Soviet Foreign Policy Objectives: Since de Gaulle's precise policies are obscure, it can be presumed that the USSR is unsure of the gains it could expect from a de Gaulle government. It must expect that de Gaulle would set a course for France of greater independence from the NATO alliance and that he might make some approaches for closer relations with the USSR. A few months ago Soviet diplomats in Paris were reportedly pointing out to French leaders the advantages of a more authoritarian government (such as a de Gaulle one) and the opportunities it would have to follow a more independent course. It is possible that the USSR exaggerates the anti-NATO nature of a de Gaulle policy. De Gaulle's tactics would probably be to use the threat of a more independent policy as a way of getting greater concessions from the Western powers and he probably does not actually contemplate breaking completely with NATO. There is a possibility, however, that he may pull France out of the Western European economic organizations.

2. While the USSR might stand to gain from de Gaulle's tactics with regard to the West, it would not serve the Soviet interest should de Gaulle achieve a settlement in Algeria. Such a compromise seems more likely under de Gaulle than under any other government in the near future. An Algerian compromise, if it is possible, would weaken the influence of the UAR and lessen Communist opportunities throughout North Africa while increasing the chances that Western influence would remain strong in these areas.

3. While Soviet foreign policy objectives with regard to France are clear enough, since the two major anticipated results of a de Gaulle government would have opposite effects, one can only speculate on how Moscow would weigh the advantages and disadvantages. On foreign policy grounds alone, the USSR probably

25X1



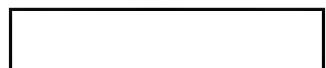
considers that the advantages of a de Gaulle government somewhat outweigh the disadvantages.

4. Moscow's Hopes for the French Communist Party: While foreign policy considerations are more important to Moscow, since these are not heavily weighted in one direction the prospects for the French Communist party assume importance. In these considerations, however, the USSR is thinking primarily of how the Communist party might attain a position from which to influence French foreign policy; it does not anticipate an actual Communist seizure of power. It can be assumed that Moscow and the French Communist leadership are working closely together. The French party has consistently shown itself to be intensely loyal to Moscow. It cannot be assumed, however, that rank-and-file members of the party will support whatever directives the leadership gives.

5. The French party has shown a certain flexibility in its tactics, and a willingness to make considerable compromises in attempting to achieve its prime objective of cooperation with the Socialists. (The party is not bound rigidly, as was the German party in the early 30's, to an anti-moderate line nor does it have the hopes of the German party that it can obtain power by itself.) If de Gaulle succeeds in making good his current bid for power it will not be because the French party broke with the center and threw its weight to de Gaulle but because the Communists and other parties of the left and center are unwilling or unable to use force to block de Gaulle.

6. The USSR and the French Communists anticipate that a de Gaulle government will provide a good opportunity for at least a *de facto* united front between the Communists and Socialists in political opposition to de Gaulle. This would lead to the possibility at least that a de Gaulle government would be followed by a popular front government. These developments would end the Communist party's long isolation in French politics, give it an eventual opportunity to have some influence on French policy, and thus directly serve Soviet interests. The major obstacle to this goal thus far has been the resistance of the Socialist leadership and much of the Socialist rank-and-file to cooperation with the Communists.

7. While the USSR and the French Communists probably are not overoptimistic about a popular front government resulting directly



25X1



from a de Gaulle government, they probably anticipate some net gain from a de Gaulle government in terms of the decreasing isolation of the Communist party. It is important to emphasize that neither the USSR nor the French party probably expects that the Communists, alone or together with others, can overthrow de Gaulle and come to power through a violent revolution.

8. Present Tactics and Problems of the USSR and the French Communists: USSR must avoid appearing to interfere in French internal affairs. It presumably desires to leave the door open for good relations with a de Gaulle government to take maximum advantage of de Gaulle's anticipated more independent policy. Therefore Soviet propaganda has been restrained in criticizing de Gaulle, and there have been no official public statements, though Vinogradov said privately that events in Algeria had changed his own views from pro to anti-de Gaulle.

9. The Communist party in France, on the other hand, continues to be critical of de Gaulle and maintains a public position of opposition. The party has issued a number of statements sharply critical of the military coup in Algeria and claiming that de Gaulle was in fact the leader of this movement. It has become increasingly critical of de Gaulle and has urged united action of the leftist parties against him. It has sought to hold public meetings (banned by the government) and had called a general strike for 27 May to show its opposition to de Gaulle. The Soviet propaganda organs have quoted and echoed French Communist statements but have provided only a minimum of independent comment. The French Communists have asserted that the USSR opposes de Gaulle.

10. In the Assembly the Communists abstained on Pflimlin's investiture (and subsequent propaganda emphasized that this had saved the Republic), voted twice for his request for emergency powers, but voted in committee and on the floor to block the constitutional changes he requested. Presumably the party will take care to avoid having primary responsibility for the overthrow of the government and consequently being open to the charge of having facilitated de Gaulle's accession. Moreover, the party wants to keep every channel open to cooperation with the Socialists and therefore will vote with them. The Communist party would presumably vote against the investiture of a de Gaulle government. Since de Gaulle would also presumably insist on a majority exclusive of the Communists, this too would not have any decisive effect.



25X1



11. It is not the primary Soviet aim to have the French Communist party engage in violent action against de Gaulle forces. Such action would be advantageous to the USSR and the French party if joint forceful action with the Socialists succeeded in bringing down de Gaulle and establishing a united front government. Such an outcome is unlikely, however, because of the strength of military support for de Gaulle, the unwillingness of the Socialists to take joint forceful action, and the apathy of rank-and-file Communists.<sup>11</sup> There are, of course, halfway measures such as extensive general strikes that are neither prolonged nor the prelude to revolutionary activity. Similarly, there is one report that the Communists will engage in token forceful resistance with about one-quarter of their militants.

12. If de Gaulle succeeds in returning to power legally, violent Socialist resistance is highly unlikely and consequently violent, prolonged Communist resistance is unlikely. Rather than becoming thus isolated the Communist would concentrate on seeking a joint political stand with the Socialists.

13. If de Gaulle appears to have come to power by force, the unpredictable nature of developments makes speculation about the Communist role more difficult. If the Socialists reacted with violence, the Communist would presumably have to. If not, the Communists are probably too weak, have too few loyal militants, and have too great a stake in following the Socialist line to act forcefully alone. If a military coup were of short duration, as seems likely, Socialist and Communist violent resistance is unlikely. If there were military forces able and willing to resist a coup and a prolonged and extensive civil war developed, Socialist and Communist involvement in the fighting seems inevitable. This last possibility seems least likely; there seems to be a profound reluctance among all French elements to engage in civil war.

14. Conclusions: Under Moscow's guidance, the Communist position is more FLEXIBLE, more sensitive to opinion, more concerned with keeping in step with other parties of the left than in earlier periods. De Gaulle's accession to power would probably be a net gain from Moscow's viewpoint and would certainly not be viewed by the USSR as a catastrophe. Therefore, the French Communists are under no pressure to sacrifice everything to try to bar his way to power. If Communist tactics in opposing de Gaulle could achieve unity of action with the Socialists, and especially if this could lead to a popular front government, the benefits to Moscow would



25X1

25X1



probably be greater than would result from a de Gaulle government. Thus the Communists must oppose de Gaulle and above all seek joint action with the Socialists. However, the cohesion of the Socialist leadership to united action, the cohesion of the rank-and-file of both parties to manning the barricades, and the strength of military support for de Gaulle make prolonged, violent Communist resistance to de Gaulle unlikely. Therefore the primary Communist tactics will probably be: constant efforts to force the Socialists into cooperative efforts; some demonstrations and strikes but no large-scale violent resistance unless the Socialists engage in such action and the country is plunged into civil war--an unlikely event.

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